

FoodBytes

Food Protection Program

November, 2009

Indiana State Department of Health

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A Message From The New Editor

Greetings from the new editor of Foodbytes. The editorial reigns have been handed to me following the retirement of Ed Norris in July. Ed was the original editor of Foodbytes since its inception in the Spring of 2000. With that first newsletter, Ed consistently provided insight into the world of food safety and regulation through various topical articles. His shoes will be difficult to fill.

A new era for Foodbytes now begins. Foodbytes will continue to provide pertinent information and education on topics covering the dynamic world of food safety science and food safety regulation. In doing so, food safety regulators throughout the state will remain connected through a sharing of common knowledge.

Within this first issue, we are fortunate to have articles contributed by Jessica Trimble, Education Manager of the ISDH Local Health Department Outreach Office, and Travis Goodman, ISDH Food Defense Coordinator, Southern District. A heartfelt thank you to both for their submissions.

I would like to encourage all readers to contribute to this newsletter. Relevant issues are best received from those who deal directly with them in the field. Please forward your questions, field experiences, or article ideas for inclusion in future issues. Your contributions and input will further ensure that articles will remain timely and topical to current events occurring throughout the state. You will find the e-mail address for submissions on Page 6. Thank you!!

Kris Thomas, ISDH

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Shellfish Sanitation Training for ISDH Staff

The staff of the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) Food Protection Program recently participated in shellfish sanitation training provided by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA). According to Scott Gilliam, ISDH Food Protection Program Director, "The Food Protection Program has

begun the process of participating in the FDA National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) that will provide Indiana with the expertise in regulating the wholesale distribution of shellfish, such as oysters, clams and mussels."

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LHD Resource SharePoint - Give it Another Chance

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) created the Local Health Department (LHD) Outreach Office in early 2009 to improve the delivery of public health services to Hoosiers through collaboration with local health departments.

"The LHD Resource SharePoint site has dramatically changed over the past few months..."

The mission of the office is to strengthen the partnerships and collaboration between the ISDH and the local health departments

through communication, customer service, and education and training. The LHD Outreach Office manages the Local Health Maintenance Fund, the Local Health department Trust Fund, the monthly ISDH-LHD webcast/conference calls, the LHD SharePoint site and SharePoint trainings, and many other programs and trainings. The LHD Resource SharePoint site has dramatically changed over the past few months in order to become a more dynamic resource for the LHDs and their staffs.

For the past few months, the LHD Outreach Office has been working hard to improve the

accessibility and information on the LHD Resource SharePoint site. Previously, each LHD was only given one login and password per LHD. Now, each LHD employee may request their own login and password and use it to personalize their preferences.

For example, if an environmentalist would like food recalls and advisories sent to their e-mail inbox instead of logging on to SharePoint to find out about the latest recalls, they can set up personal alerts to be sent to his/her inbox immediately, daily, or weekly.

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Travis Goodman's Homeland Security Detail in D.C.

Last summer I was contacted by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and asked to do a one year detail in Washington D.C. to assist with some food and agriculture projects and provide a state perspective. It was a very beneficial experience, especially in a year with so much political transition. Now that I've returned to ISDH Food Protection, I wanted to pass along some of the things I learned about DHS.

DHS became an operational federal agency on January 24, 2003. DHS is made up of Directorates and Operational Components. The Directorates are newly created structures in the agency and Components are pre-existing federal agencies that were merged to form DHS. The Components are commonly referred to as the "gang of seven" within DHS and includes

the Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Secret Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the U.S. Coast Guard.



Infrastructure Protection
Department of Homeland Security

The DHS mission is: "We will lead the unified national effort to secure America. We will prevent and deter terrorist attacks and protect against and respond to threats and hazards to the nation. We will lead the unified national effort to secure America. We will ensure safe and secure borders, welcome lawful immigrants and visitors, and promote the free-flow of commerce."

I worked in the National Protection and Programs Directorate in the Office of Infrastructure Protection (IP) at DHS. IP is the division in DHS that develops the National Infrastructure Protection Plan and insures the implementation of Homeland Security Presidential Directive Number 7.

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Shellfish Sanitation Training for ISDH Staff (continued)

(Continued From Page 1)

Scott further stated, “In the past, Indiana was not participating in the NSSP and therefore, those Indiana distributors were not being monitored to ensure compliance with the NSSP standards and requirements. Eventually, Indiana will adopt the FDA NSSP Model Shellfish Ordinance to more effectively regulate these distributors. Mark Mattox, ISDH Food Protection Program, was selected to serve as the Indiana Shellfish Sanitation Officer and is currently going through the necessary training to achieve this status. In

addition, FDA provided a 1.5 day training for all of the Food Protection Program staff on shellfish



Baskets of Clams on Dock

sanitation. FDA has recently promoted a new initiative for the inland states that were not participating in the NSSP by providing direct training and a FDA Shellfish Specialist in the vicinity to facilitate better accessibility to training and standardization. We are excited to have this opportunity to offer additional expertise to the food industry and local health departments and protection for public health.”

Updates will continue to be given on the program’s new endeavor. (See related article on Page 4 for a history of the NSSP.)

Homeland Security Detail (continued)

(Continued From Page 2)

Their focus is on preventing/deterring terrorist attacks and protecting the critical infrastructures and assets in the U.S.

Since the political transition to the new administration, they are shifting toward building “resiliency” or the ability for any of the critical infrastructures to be able to absorb a natural or intentional incident/disaster and quickly recover to normal operations.

DHS spends the majority of their budget to reduce risk through grant programs and direct project funding. The largest grant program is the State Homeland Security Grant Program. Each state that applies receives funding for reducing risk and improving response at the state/local level. At the state level, this money is controlled by the State Homeland

Security Advisor (HSA) who is usually appointed by the Governor. The HSA makes the decision within each State about how to allocate this funding. The majority of the funding typically goes to Law Enforcement, Fire Departments, and Emergency Services, but some states have been successful at acquiring funding for food and agriculture as well.

Within IP, there are DHS representatives called “Sector Specialists” that are liaisons to both Government and industry for each of the designated 18 Critical Infrastructure Sectors, which include food and agriculture. They are senior level subject matter experts in their respective Sectors and work in the incident management cell during incidents to track any impact on critical infrastructures. I worked with the Food and

Agriculture Sector Specialists during my detail. I assisted them by doing research for answering information requests from Congress or government leadership in FDA, USDA, and DHS. I worked on several other projects that I will describe in future articles.

I was able to work in the Incident Management Cell across from the National Operations Center (NOC) during the 2008 hurricane season. Since I have responded to State and local emergencies, it was very interesting to see how everyone works together at the Federal level during an emergency. Although it still takes a lot of time to route all the requests for information and/or action through the system, it seems they have improved a great deal since responding to Hurricane Katrina.

Travis Goodman
Food Defense Coordinator, ISDH

The History of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP)

The consumption of raw oysters and clams continues to be favorite foods enjoyed by the masses even though the hazards associated with eating such popular fare can, and occasionally do, result in death. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, typhoid fever outbreaks associated with consuming shellfish were often reported. In 1924, a large typhoid outbreak linked to the consumption of oysters resulted in the deaths of approximately 150 people.

At the request of the shellfish industry and State Health Officials, the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Surgeon General held a conference to determine actions that

could be taken to prevent any such recurrence. The participants included State and Federal Regulatory Officials, academia, and industry. This conference established the basis for the cooperative shellfish program that is currently used in the U.S. and foreign countries. This was the beginning of the U.S. National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) as we know it today. Responsibility for administering the NSSP was transferred from the USPHS to the FDA in 1968.

In 1982, the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) was formed to improve uniformity of state shellfish sanitation programs,

thereby improving public health. The ISSC is composed of the federal government, state regulators, and shellfish industry. The ISSC is responsible for creating the minimum shellfish program requirements in the form of a model ordinance.

Currently, there are 23 producing states, seven receiving states, five foreign countries (Canada, Chile, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand), and approximately 3,000 shellfish certified dealers in the ISSC. All prescribe to the shellfish safety requirements of the NSSP. Foreign governments have laws or regulations that equal those published in the model ordinance.

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LHD Resource SharePoint (Continued)

(Continued From Page 2)

If staff would like to be alerted when a new training is added to the training calendar, a personal alert can be set up for this as well. The alert option allows staff to receive information from SharePoint without having to log in many times throughout the day.

The divisions at the ISDH have been working hard to add updated and expanded information to the LHD Resource SharePoint site. The Food Protection page on the LHD Resource SharePoint site page includes important staff contact information, recalls and advisories, and a discussion board. The discussion board is a wonderful tool that LHD staff may use to ask questions or request feedback from other LHD employees across the

state. The Food Protection discussion board has been used to discuss goat cheese production at the retail level and common critical violations such as bare hand contact on ready-to-eat food. The discussion board is a way to connect with LHD staff at other health departments.

This site may also be used for LHDs to post articles, links, sample forms, and/or pictures. LHDs are encouraged to share resources, staff contact information, and use the site to promote their programs. There is a LHD contact section that LHDs can edit at their convenience. The more information that is posted to the site, the more valuable the site will become.

The LHD Resource SharePoint site has undergone many changes over the past few months in order to

update and expand the information that can be found on the site. The Local Health Department Outreach Office is available for SharePoint training and support, as well as general customer service. Don't hesitate to contact the LHD Outreach Office for assistance and support. Contact Jess Trimble at jtrimble@isdh.in.gov or 317-234-6623. Beth Hampshire, Communication Manager, can be contacted at bhampshire@isdh.in.gov or 317-233-7570.

*Jess Trimble, Education Manager,
LHD Outreach Office, ISDH*

The History of the NSSP (continued)

(Continued From Page 4)

The NSSP is a partnership between the states and FDA. With this partnership, Indiana will have responsibilities to ensure proper control of molluscan shellfish. One of these responsibilities is to pass adequate laws that enable the enforcement of the requirements of the NSSP. The model ordinance will eventually be adopted in Indiana to meet this requirement. Other responsibilities include ensuring that shellfish distributors are properly inspected and certified. As the Shellfish Sanitation

Officer for Indiana, Mark Mattox will carry this responsibility.



Shucking Oysters

Through the partnership, FDA also has responsibilities. These responsibilities include conducting audits to evaluate each state shellfish sanitation program for compliance to the requirements of the NSSP and providing training and technical assistance to those states who request it.

In addition, as a participant of the NSSP, Indiana will have a voice in ISSC shellfish sanitation issues.

Source: FDA

Variance vs. State Approval for A Time Control Plan

The use of time only as a public health control, instead of time used in conjunction with temperature, does not require a state variance, but the written plan that is required can be approved by the state. It can also be approved by the local health department with jurisdiction.

So, what is the difference?

A variance is only required when an operator wishes to deviate from the requirements of 410 IAC 7-24.

A variance, which is addressed in Section 114 of 410 IAC 7-24, is required only when an operator wishes to **deviate** from the requirements of the Indiana food code. A variance can only be granted (or denied) by the ISDH after a review by a variance committee. Proce-

dures for obtaining a variance are outlined in Section 114 of the code.

An operator must submit an application which includes the section of the code from which the operator wishes to deviate along with supporting evidence as to the reason(s) why the deviation will not pose a risk to public health.

In comparison, the use of “*time as a public health control*” is **allowed under Section 193 of the Indiana food code and, therefore, is not a deviation from the code**. The section does require a written and approved plan prior to use. Whereas a local health department cannot approve a variance, the time control plan can be approved by a LHD.

The confusion lies in the fact that the State can also approve a time control plan. This may be requested from an operator who has multiple establishments in different

counties. Instead of seeking approval from each local health department in which the establishments are located, the operator may submit the plan to the state for statewide approval. This should not be confused with a variance.

A chain restaurant may seek State approval for a time control plan in lieu of seeking approval from every county in Indiana in which it is located.

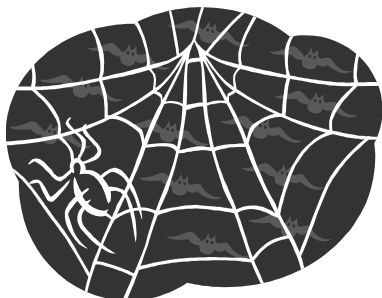
ISDH reviews the time control plan submitted. If the plan meets the requirements of Section 193, the State will approve the plan and send a memo to all local health departments to make notification of the approval. If you have further questions, please contact your area field representative.

FOOD PROTECTION PROGRAM

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ideas to the e-mail on this page.

Scientifically Speaking....

- ♦ Filter-feeding shellfish, such as oysters and clams, concentrate *V. vulnificus* in their tissues.
- ♦ When a person eats raw or undercooked shellfish, the bacteria enter the digestive tract and multiply rapidly.
- ♦ In addition to ingestion, high-risk individuals can become infected when cuts, burns or sores come in contact with seawater containing *V. vulnificus*.
- ♦ Fifty percent of patients with *V. vulnificus* infected wounds require surgical debridement or amputation.
- ♦ *Vibrio vulnificus* is considered

the most lethal of the vibrios inhabiting brackish and salt water.

- ♦ *V. vulnificus* is not the result of bacteriological or chemical pollution of marine waters, but occurs naturally in warm, coastal areas.
- ♦ *V. vulnificus* is found in higher concentrations from April through October when coastal waters are warm.
- ♦ The source of this information is the

Vibrio vulnificus Fact Sheet
for Health Care Providers
from the ISSC. www.issc.org

Calendar

December 1-3, 2009

Environmental Health Specialist Training
Indianapolis

April 9-14, 2010

Conference for Food Protection (CFP)
Providence, Rhode Island

April 2012

Conference for Food Protection (CFP)
Indianapolis